

REMARKS

Claims 1-13 and 15-19 are currently pending. By this Amendment, claims 1, 2, 6, 10, 16, 17 and 18 are amended and claim 14 is canceled without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter recited therein. Support for the amendments to claims 1, 16 and 17 can be found at least in original claim 14. Claims 2, 6, 10, 16 and 18 are amended for form. No new matter is added.

Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action asserts that the term "the at least one cut portion including only a cut part," fails to comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph because "the term 'only' excludes other structures, wherein the specification clearly indicates that other structures are present at the cut in multiple locations." This assertion is respectfully traversed.

The specification discloses at page 10, line 6 that "the cut 47b includes no uncut part" and page 10, line 7 reiterates that "[t]he cut 47b, including no uncut part ..." (emphasis added). Accordingly, the specification does not indicate that other structures are present at the cut in "multiple locations," because the cut merely includes a cut portion and no uncut portion, as disclosed at page 10, lines 3-10 of the specification. Therefore, claim 19 fully complies with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph. Applicants thus respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action asserts on page 3, that "it is unclear what structure and what location is excluded by term 'only' since there is material connected to the cut portion." Applicants respectfully traverse this assertion.

As discussed above, Applicants respectfully submit that "the at least one cut portion" includes only a cut part, and not structures connected to this cut part. Accordingly, claim 19 does not recite any material being connected to the cut portion as asserted on page 3 of the Office Action. Rather, the cut portion includes only a cut part (i.e. no uncut part), as clearly recited for claim 19. Therefore, claim 19 satisfies the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Applicants thus respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Claims 1, 16, 18 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Fujiwara (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0164317); claims 1-5, 9, 15, 16, 18 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Moser (U.S. Patent No. 4,494,746) in view of Fujiwara; claims 1-4, 9 and 13-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Sasaki et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0056961) in view of Fujiwara; claims 6-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Moser in view of Fujiwara and in further view of Ishiduka et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,217,019); claims 6-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Sasaki in view of Fujiwara and in further view of Ishiduka; claims 10-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Moser in view of Fujiwara and in further view of Ishiduka; and claims 10-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Sasaki in view of Fujiwara and in further view of Ishiduka. The rejection of cancelled claim 14 is moot and the rejection of claims 1-13 and 15-19 are respectfully traversed.

None of the applied references teaches or suggests every claimed feature of independent claims 1, 16 and 17. None of the applied references teaches or suggests the sheet package includes a fold-back part to be folded back in order to expose part of the stack of sheets, and the fold-back part is structured to be foldable by removing the one of the first part and the second part of the side part at a perforated line, as recited in independent claim 1, and as similarly recited in independent claims 16 and 17.

The Office Action asserts that the push plate 11h of Sasaki corresponds to the claimed fold back part (see Office Action, page 7). However, the push plate 11h of Sasaki folds back merely to push the recording sheets 12 toward the bottom plate 11b (see Figs. 8 and 9 and paragraph [0102] of Sasaki). When the push plate 11h is folded back, the recording sheets are not exposed.

Further, Fujiwara does not cure the above-described deficiencies of Sasaki. The sheets of Fujiwara are exposed merely by removing the cap-shaped part 2, and not by folding back any fold-back portion. Therefore, Sasaki and Fujiwara do not teach or suggest a fold-back portion that exposes a stack of sheets when folded back, as recited in independent claims 1, 16, and 17.

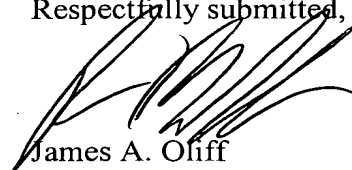
Moreover, Moser and Ishiduka do not remedy the above-described deficiencies of Fujiwara and Sasaki. The Office Action does not reject original claim 14, whose subject matter has been incorporated into independent claims 1, 16 and 17, over Moser. Further, Ishiduka is applied by the Office Action only for its alleged teaching of a sensor provided to the sheet storage unit.

Therefore, for at least these reasons, independent claims 1, 16 and 17 are patentable over any alleged combination of Fujiwara, Moser, Sasaki and Ishiduka. Claims 2-13, 15, 18 and 19, which depend from independent claim 1, are also patentable for at least their dependency on independent claim 1, as well as for the additional features they recite. Applicants thus respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Patrick T. Muffo
Registration No. 60,342

JAO:PTM/rle

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OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 320850
Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4850
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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